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CHANGES IN THE REGENTS' SYLLABUS

WITH the university convocation held at Albany last June, it may be said that the work of revising the 1900 edition of the regents' syllabus closed.

In 1895 the associated academic principals appointed a committee of three to represent them in the work of revision. While this committee had no original authority, yet from the outset its work with the officers of the board of regents has been the closest, and its suggestions to them have been received with the greatest consideration, and in a majority of instances approved. The committee began its work by mailing a letter of inquiry to every principal, superintendent, and college president of the state. These replies were carefully studied. The number of letters and circulars relating to the work which the committee sent out exceeds two thousand, not including the letters and circulars necessary in the work of the subcommittees on English, history, mathematics, and science.

For the past two years the subject of "Syllabus Revision" has had a prominent place on the programs at the principals' conference and at convocation. The committee has made four reports. These reports have been published in different educational magazines¹ and in the proceedings of the bodies receiving the report. Before the final report was made at the principals' conference last December, a circular containing a summary of the proposed changes was mailed to every principal, superintendent, and college president in the state, and to several prominent school men in other states. This summary was discussed in detail by the conference. Special reports also have been made upon literature, history, mathematics, and science, and published in the proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Conference of the Associated Academic Principals. There has been

¹SCHOOL REVIEW, October 1899; *New York Education*, March 1899; *Convocation Proceedings*, 1898, 1899; *Proceedings of Academic Principals' Conference*, 1898, 1889.

an attempt to make the revision in the interest of all concerned, and to give the widest publicity to the proposed changes. In addition to the above, the director of the high-school department of the University of the State of New York, in his report for 1898, pages 384-388, gives a summary of the proposed changes up to that date. In April of the present year an edition of the new syllabus has been published and circulated as "Proof Under Revision." Criticism has been invited, and many valuable suggestions have been thus received. It is highly creditable to the authors of the 1895 edition that five years' use revealed so few things to be changed. The bulk of the 1895 edition stands with few changes in the 1900 revision.

During the last few years educational thought has been largely directed by the strong reports of committees carefully chosen by representative educational bodies to study particular phases of education. These reports have influenced to a large degree the revision of the syllabus, particularly so the report of the Committee of Ten, the Committee on College Entrance Requirements, the Committee of Fifteen, the Columbia Conference, and the Committee of Seven. As a result of the work of the regents' office and the principals' committee, we have the present edition, which, among other changes, contain the following:

The preacademic studies remain the same, but the instruction is supposed to include more of history, civics, and drawing than heretofore. No separate examinations will be given in these branches for the next five years, but it is highly probable that in the 1905 revision all three will be included in the preliminaries—the subjects covered by the first eight years of school work. While this change does not meet the requirements of the Committee of Fifteen, yet it is a long step in that direction. It also helps to enrich the grammar-school course with the essentials for intelligent citizenship. Emphasis is laid upon the avoidance of puzzles in arithmetic and upon the omission of useless details in geography.

The number of academic studies has been reduced from 75 to 61, as scheduled in former editions, and raised from 61 to

74 by the addition of the commercial branches, manual training, and Spanish. A special syllabus has been issued for the work in manual training, and another for the commercial work.

The following tables are the three most important summaries contained in the 224 pages of the new syllabus, and will be most frequently consulted:

REGENTS' SYSTEM OF EXAMINATION

ACADEMIC STUDIES.—The table assumes that each student takes three studies each day for five days each week. The term "count" represents ten weeks' work in one of these studies. The figure prefixed to each subject shows how many counts are allowed that subject. To obtain a regents' diploma it is necessary that the preliminaries be passed, and 48 academic counts including 8 English, 6 mathematics, 6 science, and 6 history. The preliminaries are: Reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, grammar, and geography.

GROUP I.—LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

ENGLISH ¹	MODERN FOREIGN
4 English, first year <i>or</i>	4 German, first year.
2 Advanced English and	4 German, second year.
2 English composition.	4 German, third year.
4 English, second year <i>or</i>	4 French, first year.
2 Rhetoric and	4 French, second year.
2 American selections.	4 French, third year.
4 English, third year <i>or</i>	4 Spanish, first year.
2 Advanced English composition and	4 Spanish, second year.
2 English selections.	4 Spanish, third year.
4 English reading <i>or</i>	ANCIENT
4 History of literature.	4 Latin, first year. ²
2 Business English. ⁴	4 Latin, second year. ³
	4 Caesar's Commentaries.

¹No extra counts will be given to those who pass both in English, first year and advanced English and English composition; English, second year and rhetoric; English, third year and advanced English composition.

²In first year Latin and Greek, candidates may take the separate examination or defer it and receive eight counts each for passing Caesar and Anabasis examinations, which include the work of the first year.

³Latin, second year, is offered as a substitute for Caesar, and Greek, second year, as a substitute for Anabasis; Latin, third year, and Greek, third year, are essentially sight translations.

⁴The special subjects for state business credentials may be credited toward academic credentials; advanced bookkeeping, commercial law, business English, business arithmetic, business practice and office methods, commercial geography and history of commerce, typewriting and business writing.

GROUP 1.—LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE—*continued*

4	Latin, third year. ³	4	Greek, first year. ²
2	Sallust's Catiline.	4	Greek, second year. ³
2	Cicero's Orations.	4	Xenophon's Anabasis.
4	Virgil's Aeneid.	2	Homer's Iliad.
1	Virgil's Eclogues.	4	Greek, third year. ³
1	Latin composition.	1	Greek composition.

GROUP 2.—MATHEMATICS

2	Advanced arithmetic.	2	Solid geometry.
4	Algebra.	2	Trigonometry.
2	Advanced algebra.	2	Business arithmetic. ¹
4	Plane geometry.		

GROUP 3.—SCIENCE

PHYSICAL		BIOLOGIC	
2	Astronomy.	2	Botany.
4	Physics.	2	Zoölogy.
4	Chemistry.	2	Physiology and hygiene.
GEOLOGIC			
2	Physical geography.		
2	Geology.		

GROUP 4.—HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

2	Elementary U. S. history and civics.	2	Advanced U. S. history.
2	Greek history.	2	Civics.
2	Roman history.	2	Economics.
2	Medieval history.	2	Commercial geography. ¹
2	English history.	2	Commercial Law. ¹
		1	History of commerce. ¹

GROUP 5.—OTHER STUDIES.

2	Stenography, 50	} words per minute.	2	Advanced bookkeeping.
1	Stenography, 100		2	Business practice, etc.
1	Stenography, 125		1	Business writing.
2	First year home science.		2	Typewriting.
2	Second year home science.			
2	First year shop work.			FORM-STUDY AND DRAWING.
2	Second year shop work.		2	Drawing.
2	Bookkeeping.		2	Advanced drawing.

¹ No extra counts will be given to those who pass both in English, first year and advanced English and English composition; English, second year and rhetoric; English, third year and advanced English composition.

² In first year Latin and Greek, candidates may take the separate examination or defer it and receive eight counts each for passing Caesar and Anabasis examinations, which include the work of the first year.

³ Latin, second year is offered as a substitute for Caesar, and Greek, second year, as a substitute for Anabasis; Latin, third year, and Greek, third year, are essentially sight translations.

Regents' credentials.—Certificates are in black type and are given for an attainment of 75 per cent. in a regents' examination in the studies printed after each.

1. *Passcard.*—Any study.
2. *Preliminary (preacademic) certificate.*—Reading, writing, spelling, elementary English, arithmetic, geography.
3. *Medical student certificate.*—All matriculates after January 1, 1897, must secure 48 academic counts.
4. *Law student certificate.*—Advanced English, English composition, first year Latin, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, English history, United States history, civics, economics, or any 36 academic counts.
5. *Dental student certificate.*—Any 36 academic counts or their equivalents (for matriculates before January 1, 1901).
6. *Veterinary student certificate.*—Any 24 academic counts or their equivalents (for matriculates before January 1, 1901).
7. *Academic certificates.*—All preliminaries and the subjects specified for the first year certificate; all preliminaries and any 24, 36, 48, 60, etc., counts, if one sixth of these counts are in English.¹
8. *Academic diploma.*—All preliminaries and any 48 counts, if not less than eight are in English¹ and not less than six each from the second, third and fourth groups.

Classical academic diploma.—This credential will be issued on request to such students as meet the requirements for an academic diploma and have credit for the required classical studies. The required classical students are as follows: first year Latin, Caesar, or second year Latin, Cicero, Virgil, Latin composition, first year Greek, Xenophon or second year Greek, *Iliad*, Greek composition, Greek history, Roman history.

Advanced diplomas.—This single diploma provides for all academic courses longer than the regular 48 count course covered by the academic diploma above. It is issued only to those who have earned the regular 48 count diploma and 12, 24 or 36, etc., counts in addition.

The number of counts that each subject represents is given in the table of groups. For 24 counts a two-year certificate will be issued, and for 36, 48, etc., counts, a three, four, etc., year certificate will be issued. A new certificate will be given when 12 additional counts which represent a full year's work are earned.

First year certificate.—No certificate is issued for 12 counts unless it includes the preliminaries and first year English¹ (or English composition and two other English counts).

¹ Any foreign language may be substituted for English, but the papers of all students who claim this privilege will be revised carefully for English.

PROGRAM OF EXAMINATIONS
JANUARY AND JUNE

MONDAY 9: 15 A.M.-12: 15 P.M.	TUESDAY 9: 15 A.M.-12: 15 P.M.	WEDNESDAY 9: 15 A.M.-12: 15 P.M.	THURSDAY 9: 15 A.M.-12: 15 P.M.	FRIDAY 9: 15 A.M.-12: 15 P.M.
German, 2d year French, 2d year Virgil's Eclogues Adv. arithmetic Algebra Adv. drawing Latin composition	English, 2d year Rhetoric Amer. selections German, 1st year Latin, 1st year Adv. algebra Greek history Adv. bookkeeping	Greek comp. Plane geometry Physics Chemistry U. S. history and civics Commercial law	Sallust Greek, 1st year Arithmetic Trigonometry Adv. U. S. history Stenography Commercial geog. Typewriting	Writing Elem. English Cicero Medieval history Business English
1: 15-4: 15 P.M.	1: 15-4: 15 P.M.	1: 15-4: 15 P.M.	1: 15-4: 15 P.M.	1: 15-4: 15 P.M.
Adv. English English, 1st year German, 3d year French, 1st year French, 3d year English comp. Roman history	Caesar Latin, 2d year Virgil's Aeneid Latin, 3d year Xenophon's Anab. Greek, 2d year Botany Spanish, 1st year Spanish 3d year Business arith.	English, 3d year English selection Adv. Eng. comp. Phys. and hygiene Zoology Economics Bookkeeping Business practice	Greek, 3d year Homer's Iliad Geography Phys. geography Astronomy English history Civics Spanish, 2d year History of commerce	Spelling English reading Hist. of literature Solid geometry Geology Drawing Business writing Reading

Two parallel four-year courses are offered in English. These courses are so arranged that schools desiring full year courses in literature may take one line of work while those whose local conditions require them to follow a different line of work may take the half year courses. Throughout the four years the courses are so arranged that students may pass from one to the other without loss.

A three-year course in Spanish has been added to the modern foreign languages. This addition was made to meet the demand growing out of our newly established commercial relations in Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines. The courses in German, French and Spanish are designed to require as much and as careful work as is given to three years study of Latin.

Instead of giving two short 10-week courses in Trigonometry, one of twenty weeks is offered. A twenty-weeks course in business arithmetic is also offered. No other changes were made in the mathematical group of studies.

Continuous courses of one year are offered in physics and chemistry. An attempt has been made to meet the demand for longer courses in these subjects than has been heretofore given.

At the same time by giving an examination both in January and June those schools that are unable to provide adequate equipment for a year's course are not barred from doing the one half year work. It is hoped that this change will be an inducement to teach more of one science and not attempt so large a variety. The syllabus advises that a twenty-weeks course in physical geography be offered and when practical that it be followed by a twenty-weeks course in geology, thus giving a year to the earth sciences. For the first time notebooks will form a prominent feature of the examinations. These will be noted by the state inspector of his regular visits. The principal will certify that they have been properly kept and will hold himself in readiness to forward upon demand these notebooks to the regents' office for inspection. In botany special emphasis is laid upon the study of the life process of plants. In physiology stress is laid on the cell theory and upon the digestive processes. Attention is called to the different kinds of foods and their relative digestibility and the simple experiments illustrating physiologic phenomena.

The history group came in for a considerable share of revision. Under existing conditions more credit could be obtained from a single year's work in history by one half than in any other department. There were plenty of instances on record where the student of general history devoting only the time allotted for that subject, had not only passed his general history but had also passed and received full credit for Greek, Roman and French history while New York state history was passed in an astonishing number of instances with barely one week's study. The problem, then, in the revision of the history syllabus was, how to arrange a course that would be satisfactory and complete and avoid existing pitfalls. The result of the discussion was general history, French history, New York state history and the reading courses in United States history were dropped. The outline in United States history simplified enlarging the requirements for biographic reading and adding the elements of civil government. In place of general history has been inserted Medieval; Greek and Roman history together

form a full year course. Medieval and English history also form a year course, and advanced American history and civics, including national finance and the principles of economics, form a third year.

Possibly the most radical changes in the arrangement of studies is found in the last group. This has been brought about by the addition of courses of manual training and commerce. Heretofore comparatively few schools have attempted manual training. It is hoped that the recognition of the work by the the state will encourage this branch of education. While a large number of schools have had a so-called commercial course, yet they have been in most instances but mere smatterings of book-keeping and a few other branches, making it necessary for that student who wanted a more thorough business education to go to a commercial school. It was difficult to ascertain the reason why high schools should continue to prepare students for commercial schools. The present syllabus makes it possible for all schools who are able to support a four years' commercial course to do so and receive the state business diploma, the highest business credential given in the state.

The syllabus in drawing has been entirely revised and modernized. Plates selected for study as appeared in the 1895 revision have been omitted. Standard works covering the whole field are recommended as a part of the equipment for drawing in secondary schools.

There has been no change made in the names of the credentials to be given, but any foreign language may be substituted for English in any credential. This removes the heretofore existing handicap of the student who elected the old or new classical course. This change does not prevent the classical student from studying English. It simply does not require him to do so in order to graduate. The assumption being that in a four-years' secondary course if seven twelfths of the time is to be given up to the study of foreign languages that of the remaining five twelfths, three of them should not be positively prescribed for further language study. The quarrel, if any exists, is with those who insist upon spending upon Latin and Greek, 1400 of the

2400 hours of a secondary course, or else it lies at the door of those who prevent the beginning of a foreign language in the eighth year.

The daily program has been materially changed placing the eleventh and twelfth subjects, or the junior and senior years of the high school, in the forepart of the week, the preliminaries, first and second year high-school subjects in the later part. This change is made in order that students who expect to graduate and in those localities where graduation depend upon passing the state examination, may know as early as possible the result of their work.

The special topic plan is discontinued, and last, but by no means least, grants of public money will hereafter be made upon the basis of academic attendance.

September 1 saw the new syllabus in force. Its success can only be determined after it has passed through the crucible of the class room.

F. D. BOYNTON,

Chairman Committee from Academic Principals

ITHACA HIGH SCHOOL